2: Rock K-5 (1934- ) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16



post-haste on news reaching the town that the Tong-wa Tibetans, who live in Hsi-k'ang 西康 to the north of Chung-tien, are on the war-path. These people not only loot in and around Chung-tien, Bběr-ddĕr, etc., but they often cross the Yangtze and invade Li-chiang territory, as in 1922, when they burned the town of Ta-ku, and killed many people, shooting the girls, who had climbed trees to avoid falling into their hands, like pigeons off the branches. When I visited Ta-ku shortly afterwards I found the town in a terrible state; many girls had broken limbs which had ulcerated and were beyond hope. In 1933 the Tibetans came again, but satisfied themselves by occupying Chung-tien for a considerable time, whence they undertook raiding expeditions in various directions.

The present native ruler of Bběr-ddĕr is of the rank of Pa-tsung 把總 (Sergeant), and besides Bběr-ddĕr rules also over his own district called Ha-ba (Ha-pa), to the south. His family name is Yang 楊. His Mohammedan ancestors came originally from Shan-hsi province. They lived in Ta-li, but escaped during the Mohammedan rebellion in 1856 and fled to Chung-tien. He again is under the immediate control of the Ch'ien-tsung 千總 (Chiliarch, Lieutenant) of Ch'iao-t'ou 橋頭, also of the name of Yang, though they are not related. Both positions are hereditary. The latter is directly under the magistrate of Chung-tien, who is usually an absentee. Yang Pa-tsung of Ha-pa is a half-breed, his mother being a Tibetan woman and his father a Chinese Mohammedan. The latter was killed by Tibetan bandits in a raid which they were making into his territory. Unfortunately, the present ruler, who is addicted to opium, lacks all the qualities necessary to control such a district, and one can but pity the poor peasants who have to look to such an individual for help in time of stress. It is impossible for a magistrate to remain or keep order, unless he has a large force of regular troops to rely on for protection. The few militia soldiers, with antiquated, rusty rifles, and bullets which often do not fit the barrel, are no protection against the wild hordes of Tong-wa Tibetans, who are usually well armed.

Strange as it may seem, these Tibetan bandits were often armed by Chinese generals, residing in Ning-yüan fu, Ssu-ch'uan, under whose nominal jurisdiction they come. The generals, being interested mainly in money, sold their old rifles to the highest bidders, in this case the Tibetans and Lo-lo on the Yün-nan border. In 1931 when I was in Yung-ning, the good Tsung-kuan 總管 who, unfortunately for his country, has passed on to the Great Beyond, complained to me bitterly about the sale of arms to the wild Tibetans and Lo-lo by the Ning-yüan generals. They had actually sent for the Tibetans, sold them their surplus or old rifles, and given them a *hu-chao* 護照 (passport) and even a Chinese escort to prevent their being molested *en route*. The King of Mu-li (Mi-li) did not wish them to pass through his territory, but could not refuse them transit in view of their passes from the Ning-yüan generals, under whose jurisdiction the Mu-li King comes.

In 1929 Ch'en 陳,[1] the Tsung-pan 總辦 of Wa-li 窪裏 on the Ya-lung River in Ssu-ch'uan, sent many loads of rifles, commandeering peasants on the road to carry them to Yung-ning in Yün-nan, to be sold to whoever had the money

[1] He was murdered by the Communists in April, 1934, when the latter passed through Ssu-ch'uan from Yün-nan.

2: Rock K-5 (1934- ) 1947 AF16 Southwest China AF16



to buy them for more than 100 dollars silver apiece with 25 rounds of ammunition. In order that they should not fall into the hands of the Lo-lo or Tibetans the rulers of Yung-ning had to buy as their finances allowed. When Ch'en Tsung-pan and his party were in Yung-ning on their way towards Li-chiang to sell their remaining rifles, the Gangkar-ling Tibetans, having learned of their presence there with arms for sale, came post-haste to Yung-ning, followed and overtook them at a village to the south. They then attacked them in order to capture the arms. Ch'en, who had some Ssu-ch'uan soldiers with him, resisted, keeping up a constant fire and using up all the ammunition which was to be sold with the rifles. The Tibetans retreated and finding a Hsiang-ch'eng 鄉城 Tibetan caravan which was returning from Li-chiang, attacked and robbed it. Under such conditions, the poor unarmed peasants have indeed a difficult existence.

From the south there are three approaches to the Ha-pa and Bbĕr-ddĕr territories, but the Yangtze must be crossed no matter where one enters them, coming from Yün-nan. The quickest way to reach the district used to be by way of Ta-ku immediately north of Li-chiang, two stages distant. A ferry plied there, but, since the Tibetan bandits used it to cross over to Li-chiang in 1922, it has been destroyed and there is now no intercourse with Ha-pa, at least not from the Ta-ku side. People do cross on goatskin rafts which are hastily constructed, but the skins are kept on the Chung-tien side, none being available at Ta-ku. Thus to cross from the Ta-ku side, although the easiest approach, is now impossible (1932). This still held good in 1944.

The second best approach, only feasible in the summer, is via the pass called Hsüeh-men-k'an 雪門砍 (Snow gate cut) over the mountain near Bbĕr-ddĕr to the west. The valley which leads to it from the Bbĕr-ddĕr side is called Gyi-na lo (Black water gulch). From the pass a trail leads west to the Yangtze above Ch'iao-t'ou (Bridge head). From autumn to spring the pass is deep in snow, and many have lost their lives in trying to cross in the winter season.

The third and longest and most difficult approach is the one by the Yangtze gorges. When mentioning the Yangtze gorges, those known to the tourists at I-ch'ang 宜昌 come into mind, but let it be said that the latter can never be compared with the gorge the Yangtze has cut for itself through the Li-chiang Snow range. Having always wished to explore the gorge through the Yü-lung Shan, I took this route to Bbĕr-ddĕr, and it is this which I shall describe. Bacot is said to have traversed the gorge, but he says little or next to nothing about it, and mentions it as being 2,000 metres deep. It is much more than that, and 10,000 feet is about right.

### 2. FROM NV-LV-K'Ö TO THE MOUTH OF THE YANGTZE GORGE

Nv-lv-k'ö (At the foot of the snow range), or Hsüeh-sung-ts'un 雪嵩村[3] as the Chinese call it, is situated at the end of the north-western branch of the

[3] (Hsüeh) Sung is the highest and central peak of the Wu-yo 五嶽 (Five sacred mountains) on which the ancient emperors worshipped Shang-ti (God). The Sung peak lies in Ho-nan fu in the province of Ho-nan, on the watershed between the Yellow and the Han Rivers. As the title of Pei-yo (North sacred mountain) had been bestowed on the Yü-lung Shan, the village lying at its foot was given the name Sung, which also stands for eminent and lofty.

5: Davies G-5 (1894-1900) 1909 AF16 Southwest China AF16



7/13 Protection Levy. The soldiers[1] were chiefly from Hu-nan and Ssŭ-ch'uan provinces. The men were good enough, but they were wretchedly armed. Among a hundred men one might see ten different sorts of weapon, from the most modern rifles to flint and steel muzzle-loaders. Cartridges are served out anyhow, and a man often gets ammunition that does not fit his rifle. They therefore like getting weapons of as big a bore as possible. A small cartridge wrapped round with rags or paper can be got into a big bore rifle and might go off, but a big cartridge with a small rifle is naturally hopeless.

7/12 On the 23rd a fairly good road, still through the hills, brought us to Shih-t'i, a fort commanded by Ma, a Panthay or Chinese Mahommedan, who formerly raised and commanded a band of men of his own and used to escort trading caravans through this part of the Kachin country, getting paid by the merchants. Now that the Chinese Government had taken over the safe-guarding of the road, he had been given the rank of an officer in the Trade Protection Levy.

Just before entering the fort we passed between two Kachins' heads in little baskets, stuck on poles on each side of the road. The Chinese told us they could not walk far from their forts alone. Only three or four months before this a Chinese non-commissioned officer had been murdered on the road.

At Sare P'êng, the Chinese deputy who had been with us all the time, left for Momien. He had been most civil and friendly, and we had got on excellently with him and were very sorry to part from him.

On the 24th a steep downhill road took us to the Nampaung, a mountain stream 30 yards wide, which forms the boundary between Burma and China, and we said good-bye to Colonels Liu and Wang and climbed up to the British fort, garrisoned then by a detachment of the 3rd Burma Infantry under Lieut. Whitehead. A hilly march to Myothit and a boat journey of 7½ hours down the Taping brought us into Bhamo on the 26th January, 1894.

[1] [garrison of Sare, Kachin Hills.-- Analyst]